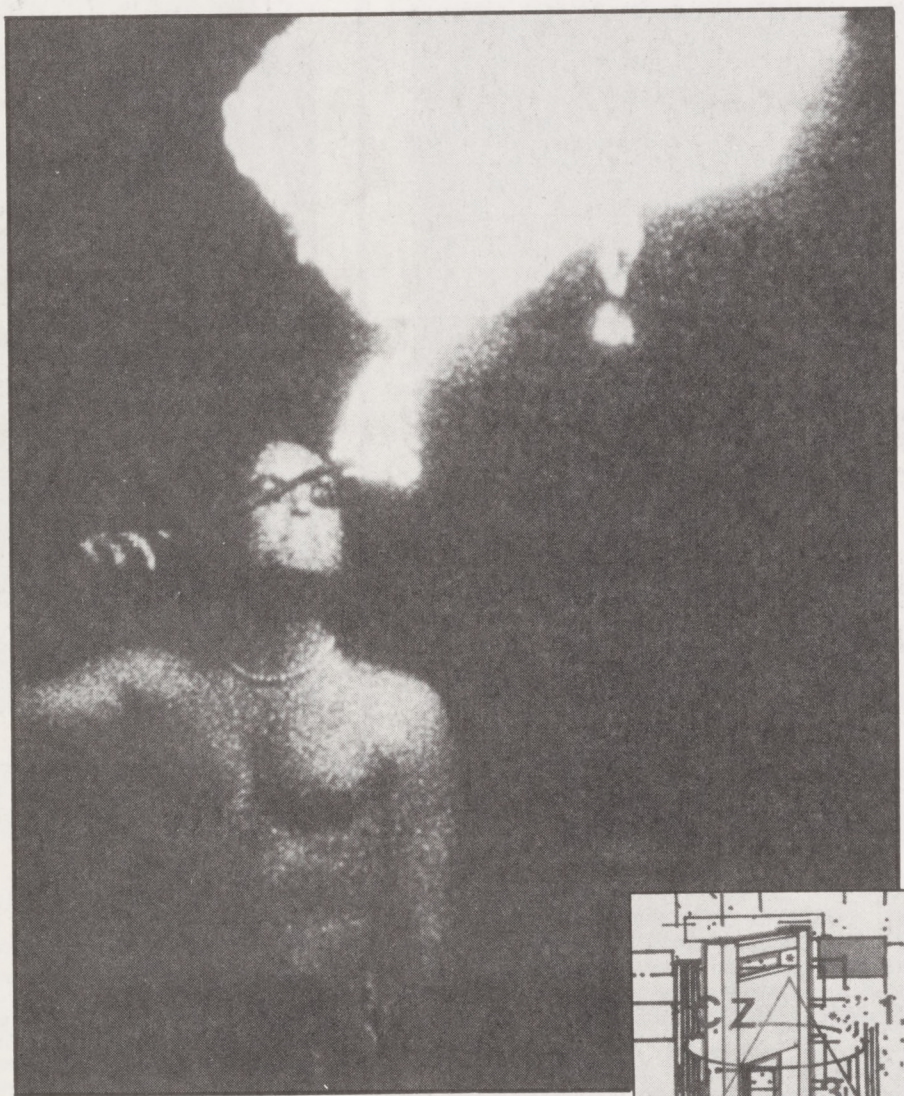
cinematheque

WINTER 1987



TENDENCIES TO EXIST by Lisl Ponger

FEATURING:

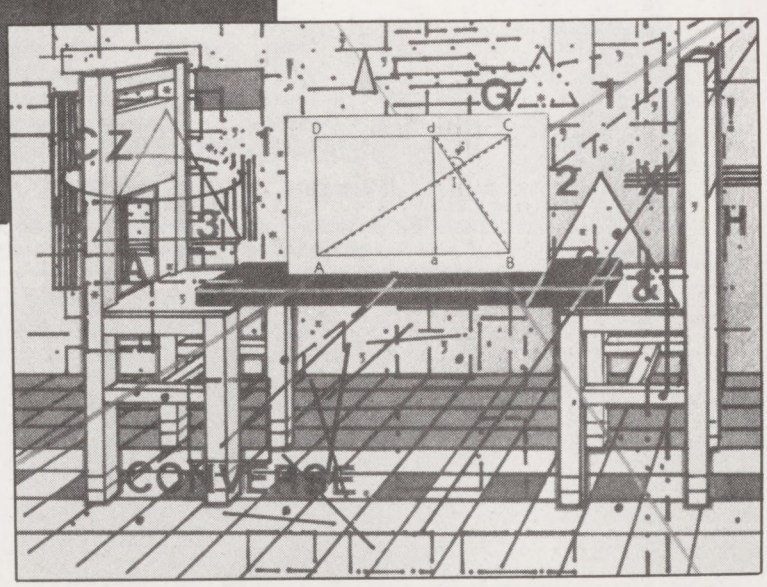
Cinematograph publication party

Recent Animation from the U.S. & Europe

New films by San Francisco filmmakers

Ernie Gehr
Adele Friedman
Chuck Hudina
Power Boothe
and others,
in person...

Super-8 Films from Vienna



OBJECT CONVERSATION by Paul Glabicki

FREAKS by Tod Browning

SIGNAL — GERMANY ON THE AIR by Ernie Gehr

Hollis Frampton filming WINTER SOLSTICE

KELIMBA by Peter Tscherkassky

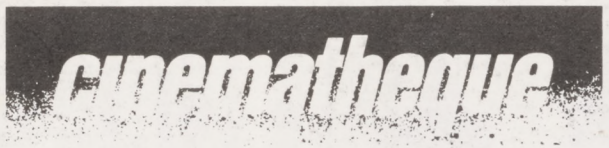
WEIRDED OUT AND BLOWN AWAY by Sharon Greytak

SOUND OF SPACE by Lisl Ponger

FRIENDS OF THE CINEMATHEQUE

Many of our friends and supporters have responded to our fundraising letter of last November. If you haven't sent in a donation and are planning to do so, consider this a reminder that your support is crucial to the continued well-being of this unique cultural resource. We would like to thank the following for contributions received through December 29th: Mark Alberding, Alice Armstrong, R. Patrick Atherton, Glenn Baldwin, Stan Brakhage, James Broughton & Joel Singer, Rudy & Yvonne Burckhardt, Malcolm Campbell, Betty Crocker, Judy Dater, Michael Dawson, Delia Dempsey, Nathaniel Dorsky, Matt Ettinger, Steve Fagin, Fania Foss, Carol Gerstein, Steve Gano, Ardath Grant, Robert Haller, Lynn Hershman, Karen & Douglas Holmes, Laurence Kardish, Andrew Karp, Marjorie Keller, Lynn Kirby, Nancy Kletzien, Barbara Klutinis, Jane Koegel & Dennis Letbetter, Edith Kramer, Bob & Barbara Lewis, Janis Crystal Lipzin & Bill Baldewicz, Meg Madison, Alberta Mayo, Jerome McLick, John Nakagawa, Steve Osborn & Renata Breth, Sidney Peterson, Allan Phillips, Harlan Sadberry, San Francisco International Film Festival, Susan Schiller, Mark Scown, Steve Seligman, Paul Sharits, Elizabeth Sher, Leslie Singer, Dorothy Stark, Scott Stark, Thomas Stark, Rob Stephenson, Ann Stoddard, Susan Stone, Chick Strand, Clark Sturges, Patrick Sumner, Lesley Tannahill, Charalambos Theodoris, Gene Thomas, George D. Tuttle, Michael Wallin, Peter Washburn, Randy Wilson, Evelyn Winnie, Sarah Wright, Ellen Zweig and several anonymous donors.

AUTUMNAL EQUINOX by Hollis Frampton



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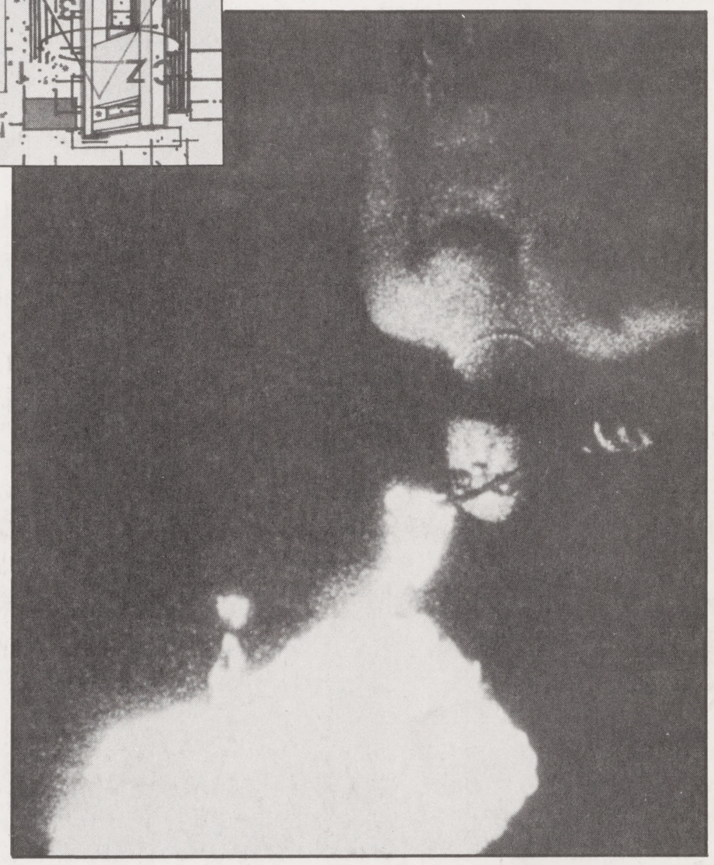

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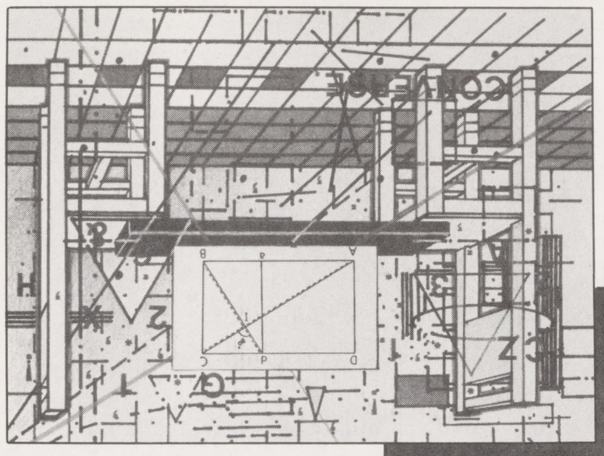

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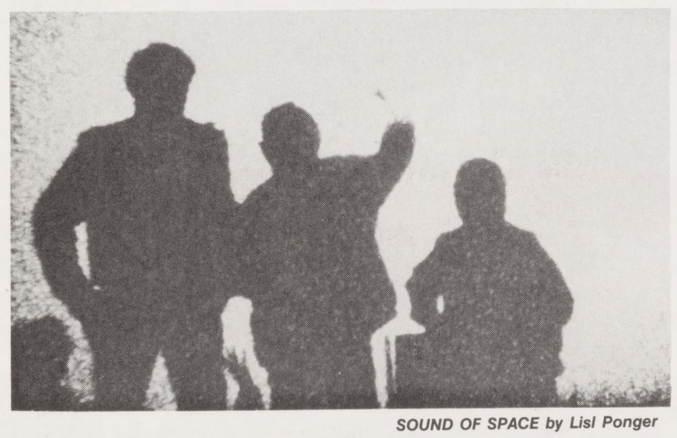

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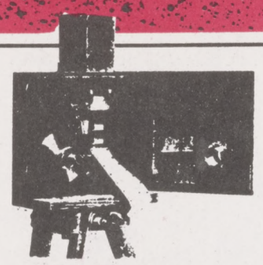


Cinematograph, Volume 2

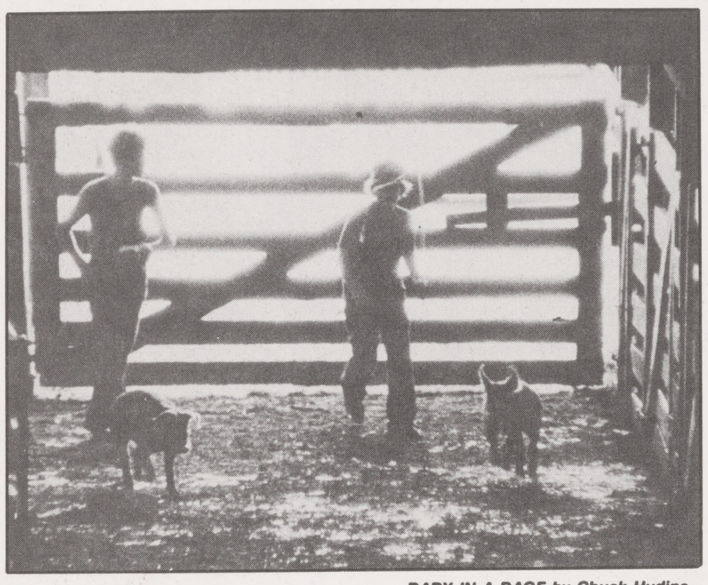
Volume 2 of Cinematograph, the Cinematheque's annual journal of film review, criticism, ideas and images, is now available. It contains a special 40-page interview section featuring 17 filmmakers from San Francisco and New York as well as articles on Roger Jacoby, Trinh T. Minh-ha, Peter Greenaway, Steve Fagin and articles by Keith Sanborn and Tony Conrad. To order, send $7.50 for individuals, $13 for institutions and foreign, to Cinematograph, 480 Potrero Ave., San Francisco, 94110. Limited numbers of Volume 1 are still available for $6/$8.

OUR 26th YEAR

The 26th year of Cinematheque screenings begins on January 18th with a party celebrating the publication of Volume 2 of Cinematograph, and 2 programs of recent work by 15 filmmakers — yet another testament to the continued vitality of the short personal film in America. We continue to believe in the independent and avant-garde film movement – every year dozens of new filmmakers and hundreds of new films are brought to our attention. The Cinematheque remains committed to the presentation of this work and, in the coming months, will present new films from across the United States as well as the thriving film scenes in Europe and Asia.

We would like to thank Mark McElhatten, Visiting Programmer for sharing his vision and generosity with the Bay Area Film community.

ALL SHOWS AT S.F. ART INSTITUTE, 800 CHESTNUT ST., 8:00 PM UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.



BABY IN A RAGE by Chuck Hudina

Jan. 18 — Sunday

CINEMATOGRAPH PUBLICATION PARTY

Special Free Admission ***Reception: 6:30*** ***Screenings: 7:30 & 9:15***

The Cinematheque will begin its winter season with a party celebrating the publication of the second volume of Cinematograph. The evening will include a wine and cheese reception and a free screening of films drawn from the Program Index in Volume 2 covering the Cinematheque's exhibition schedule from Sept. '84 to June '85. **7:30 — *Untitled*** by Melanie Berry, ***Zone*** by Sokhi Wagner, ***Twig*** by Michael Mideke, ***Mutiny*** by Abigail Child, ***Baby in a Rage*** by Chuck Hudina, ***the ragged edges of the hollow*** by Edwin Cariati, ***Frame Line*** by Gunvor Nelson. **9:15 — *After God II*** by Leslie Singer, ***Bopping the Great Wall of China Blue*** by Saul Levine, ***Morning Procession in Yangchow*** by Daniel Barnett, ***Foot'Age Shoot Out*** by Kurt Kren, ***Pearl and Puppet*** by Roger Jacoby, ***Deciduous*** by Lynn Kirby, ***What's Out Tonight Is Lost*** by Phil Solomon, and ***A Visit to Indiana*** by Curt McDowell.

Jan. 22 — Thursday

LIVING BETWEEN THE FRAMES— RECENT ANIMATION FROM THE U.S. AND EUROPE

Animation allows the imagination its fullest range of expression. The filmmaker starts with a blank slate and literally fills it in with shape, depth and movement. Tonight's program highlights the work being done by some of the most innovative animators in the U.S., including premieres by Robert Breer and George Griffin, as well as films from Hungary, Austria and the Netherlands. Films: ***Muart*** by Sabine Groschup, ***Parasympaticus*** by Mara Mattuschka, ***Object Conversation*** by Paul Glabicki, ***Metal Dogs of India*** by Chel White, ***In Need of Space*** by Bart Vegter, ***Random Positions*** by Jo Bonney & Ruth Peyser, ***Bang!*** by Robert Breer, ***Fluke*** by Emily Breer, ***Thicket*** by George Griffin, ***Remains to be Seen*** by Jane Aaron.

Jan. 25 — Sunday

NEW SUPER-8 FILMS FROM VIENNA

Filmmaker Lisl Ponger will be present.

Tonight's program features 3 Viennese filmmakers, Peter Tscherkassky, Dietmar Brehm and Lisl Ponger, who share a commitment to super-8. Their films reflect a typically Austrian interest in work that exhibits a conscious engagement with the medium, although the emphasis has shifted from the strictly conceptual approach of the 70s towards an integration of structure and content. Ponger's films weave picturewebs with multiple levels of meaning; Tscherkassky re-works the filmic space of the picture frame; Brehm reacts to the picture environment with a critique of destruction. **The program is co-sponsored with the Goethe Institute of San Francisco and is made possible by the Austrian Institute and the Consulate General of Austria.**

Jan. 29 — Thursday

AN ERNIE GEHR OVERVIEW, THE EARLY WORK

Filmmaker Ernie Gehr in person.

"Film is a real thing and as a real thing it is not imitation . . .Film is a variable intensity of light, an internal balance of time, a movement within a given space." — Ernie Gehr.

Among the filmmakers active through the 70s and 80s, few have pursued their artistic vision as persistently as Ernie Gehr. His films grow out of personal concerns, but translate into a unified form and content that speak to our shared human experience.

Transparency (1969); ***History*** (1970); ***Still*** (1971). "***Still*** is, for me, the first truly Proustian film . . .mood and atmosphere seem to become slowly crystalized on particular objects." — Richard Foreman.

Feb. 1 — Sunday

ERNIE GEHR — NEW FILMS

Filmmaker Ernie Gehr in person.

Ernie Gehr remains one of the most vital and uncompromising forces in the contemporary cinema. His newest films show that even though his subjects and methods may change, his astonishing formal control and shape never weaken.

Untitled (1981); ***Signal — Germany on the Air*** (1982-85); ***Rear Window*** (1986). "Like Atget . . .Gehr could be said to photograph the street as though it were the scene of a crime . . .***Signal*** is a film about culture shock, about coping, about memory, about evidence, about the things that remain." — J. Hoberman, ***Village Voice.***

Feb. 5 — Thursday

NEW FILMS '87:

Premieres by San Francisco Filmmakers.

A program of recently completed films by filmmakers living and working in the Bay Area. Included will be the premiere screenings of: ***Continuum*** by Dominic Angerame, ***Department of the Interior*** by Nina Fonoroff, ***Wailing Wall*** by Michael Rudnick, ***Airborne*** by Andrej Zdravic, ***Shades of Meaning*** by Andrew Moore, ***The Legend of Thelma White*** by George Kuchar and students at the San Francisco Art Institute (videotape), ***Cherry Red*** by Laura Loyola, ***Wharf*** by Beth Friedman, and ***Two Motels*** by Jerome Carolfi.

Feb. 6 — Friday

OPEN SCREENING

Special Location: Eye Gallery, 758 Valencia Street

The Cinematheque continues its tradition of regular open screenings, in which all filmmakers are invited to bring recently completed work — 8mm, super-8 or 16mm, silent or sound. Films are shown on a first come-first shown basis. Admission is free.

Feb. 8 — Sunday

PASOLINI'S *NOTES FOR AN AFRICAN ORESTES*

In this 1970 feature documentary Pier Paolo Pasolini, under the pretext of filming 'notes' for a future film based on Aeschylus' ***Orestes*** set in Africa, in fact presents a revealing view of contemporary Africa. Pasolini himself is very much in evidence throughout the film, conducting interviews and interacting with the people he meets. The story of ***Orestes*** actually provides Pasolini with what he sees as a parallel between that story and the history of the emerging African nations. This is one of the Italian director's most personal and revealing films, yet it is generally overlooked and omitted from retrospectives of his work.

Feb. 12 — Thursday

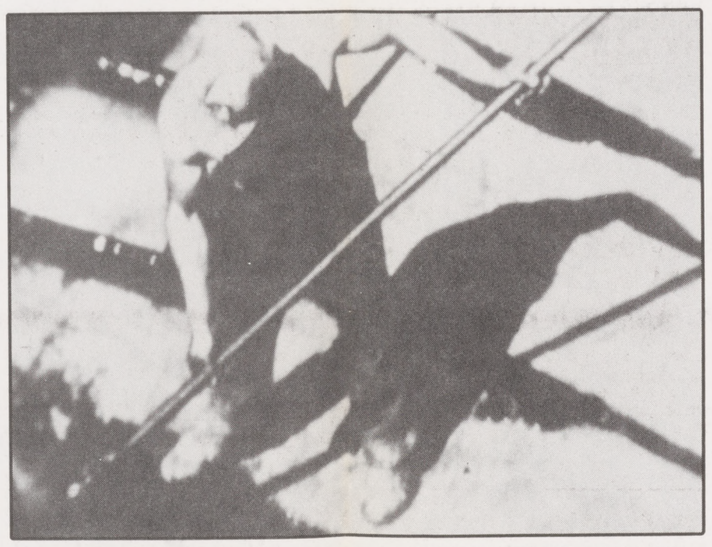
POWER BOOTHE/FRED WORDEN

Both filmmakers will be present.

Power Boothe has established himself as a significant force in painting, set design, and filmmaking. He has worked with many key artists of the past twenty years (Michael Snow, Lucinda Childs, Charles Moulton), and will show a selection of films spanning 14 years of activity. ***Match*** (1973) and ***Overture*** (1986) combine the aesthetics of early surrealist and structural filmmaking. ***When That*** (1985) concerns itself with the reactions of a woman in the context of mysterious rooms and doors. ***Mad House*** (1986) explores the provocative encounter of two aspects of one woman attempting to make contact with another. The two characters are performed by choreographer Catlin Cobb.

New York filmmaker Fred Worden will be returning to the Cinematheque for the first time since 1981, presenting a new group of films. "My work starts with the ideas of film as a non-literate, direct perceptual experience. Sound and language are then let in as a kind of test of original assumptions." (F.W.)

Films: ***How the Hell I Ripped Jack Goldstein's Painting in the Elevator*** (1986), ***Lure*** (1986), ***Plotting the Grey Scale: 2 or 3 Quick Traverses*** (1985), ***Here, There, Now Later*** (1983).



CONTINUUM by Dominic Angerame

Feb. 15 — Sunday

WEIRDED OUT IN SOCIETY

Images of the Disabled in Film.

Tonight's program contrasts two remarkable films which confront the viewer with the struggles and vulnerabilities of one of society's least understood minorities, the physically disabled. Sharon Greytak's ***Weirded Out and Blown Away*** is a powerful group portrait of 5 disabled young people, an actor, psychotherapist, filmmaker (Greytak herself), painter, and writer. Without attempting to generate sympathy, the film offers insight into the personal and social relationships of men and women who live with handicapped conditions. It challenges the public's perception of them as either weaker or more courageous than the non-disabled. Tod Browning's ***Freaks*** was severely cut or banned for many years because of his use of disfigured circus performers as actors within a dark Grand Guignol melodrama. Browning's film transcends its exploitative roots and reveals his "actors' to be sensitive and intensely human characters.

Films: ***Weirded Out and Blown Away*** (1986) by Sharon Greytak; ***Freaks*** (1932) by Tod Browning.

Feb. 19 — Thursday

REDEFINING CINEMATIC SPACE: PERFORMANCES BY LAWRENCE KUCHARZ AND MICHAEL SUMNER

Both artists will be present.

Lawrence Kucharz is a slide artist and composer who uses recorded tapes and multiple 35mm slide images to explore the relationship between sound, visual space, and text. The visual subjects are usually urban landscapes, while the sounds include computer-generated music, on-site sounds, and sound poetry using very few words. For this program, Kucharz will present ***Winterfall***, ***Viaduct***, and ***Blue City***, as well as selected sound compositions.

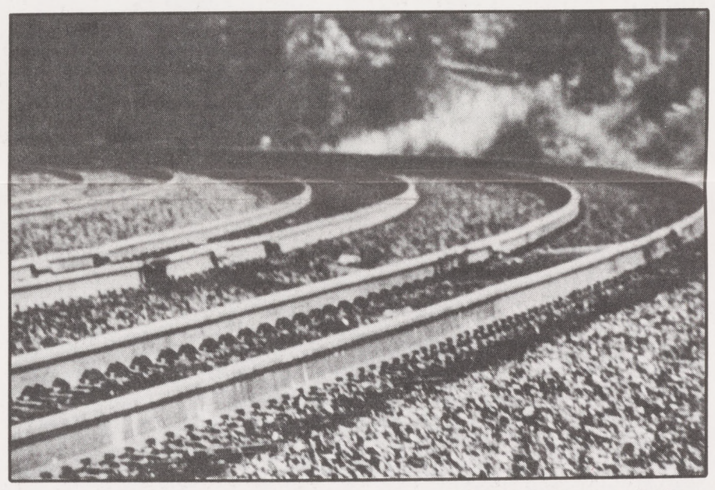
Michael Sumner uses conventional movie projectors to explore tensions created by static or greatly slowed-down imagery. Sumner employs spoken texts and recorded sounds which play off of and enhance his visuals. He will show ***Features***, ***5th and 6th***, and others.

Feb. 21 — Saturday

THE SURREAL WORLD OF VERA CHYTILOVA

Vera Chytilova emerged from the same Czechoslovakian renaissance which produced Milos Forman and Ivan Passer, but her major film ***Daisies*** differed radically from theirs in almost every way. Slapstick, anarchic, and brimming with outrageous formal devices, ***Daisies*** follows the hedonistic adventures of two young girls named Marie. In highly stylized, unearthly scenes, they attack each other with scissors and cut off each other's heads, wear butterflies instead of bikinis, and observe neither the rules of morality or reality. ***Daisies*** is filled with not-so-veiled political barbs, and Chytilova was forced to stop making films for many years after the Soviet repression during the 1970s.

Films: ***Daisies*** (1966), 74 min., color; ***The Ceiling*** (1962), 40 min., both by Vera Chytilova.



TRACKS by Lawrence Kucharz

Feb. 22 — Sunday

FILMS BY ADELE FRIEDMAN & CHICAGO FILMMAKERS

Filmmaker Adele Friedman will be present.

Special Location: Eye Gallery, 758 Valencia Street.

Chicago filmmaker Adele Friedman will make her first Cinematheque appearance, presenting a selection of work drawn from more than 100 films completed over the past 11 years. Friedman's films, usually black and white and silent, are concerned with portraiture. The early super-8s are simple accounts of friends performing everyday activities, the later 16mm films are dream-like portrayals of the fantasies and states of mind of herself and her subjects. She will also show films by Chicago filmmakers new to the Bay Area.

Films: ***Chris in the L.A. Night***; ***Doug and his Plants***; ***Chris Sleeping*** (all super-8); ***Frank, Body-building***; ***Peggy***; ***Untitled (I)*** (1983) by Adele Friedman, and others.

Feb. 26 — Thursday

PEOPLE OF THE STREETS

Film/video maker Chuck Hudina in person.

Special Location: Video Free America, 442 Shotwell St.

Since the beginning of cinema filmmakers have been drawn to working in public urban settings, excited by the visual detail of human activity. This evening's program includes three rarely seen street portraits by now-legendary photographers, followed by the premiere of Chuck Hudina's verite ***Tenderloin Blues***, a videotape portrait of the people living in San Francisco's Tenderloin district.

Films: ***Gypsies*** (1933) by Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, ***Up and Down the Waterfront*** (1946) by Rudy Burckhardt, ***Weegee's New York*** (1948) by Weegee, and ***Tenderloin Blues*** (1987) by Chuck Hudina.

Mar. 1 — Sunday

HOLLIS FRAMPTON — *SOLARIUMAGELANI*

Hollis Frampton was raised in the romantic tradition of large gestures. His role models were writers like Joyce and Pound, artists whose scope of vision challenged their abilities to the fullest. Frampton's last, greatest work aimed at nothing less than the totality of human experience. Projected as a 36-hour cycle of films (of which about 6 hours were completed), the work uses the travels of the world's first circumnavigator as a template for the filmmaker's ambitions. Each day of the year is aligned with some piece of film. The ***Solariumagelani*** were planned for the solstices and equinoxes. These films are fragmentary, rhythmical windows into the physical world, each reflecting Frampton's feelings about the spiritual fulcrums of the calendar.

Three films: ***Summer Solstice, Autumnal Equinox, Winter Solstice***.

The San Francisco Cinematheque, a project of the Foundation for Art in Cinema, is supported in part with funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, the California Arts Council, the San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund, the San Francisco Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the California Tamarack Foundation, the Zellerbach Family Fund, the Columbia Foundation, the generous contributions of the Friends of the Cinematheque, and the cooperation of the San Francisco Art Institute and Eye Gallery.

Admission: $3.50 general/$2.00 students with I.D., seniors & disabled. Discount pass $12/5 admissions. To receive future calendars by mail, contact the Cinematheque office at 558-8129 or 480 Potrero Ave., S.F., CA 94110. Steve Anker, Program Director; David Gerstein, Administrative Director. Craig Baldwin, Peter Herwitz & Chika Ogura, Exhibition Assistants; Lance Acord, Azian Nurudin & George Spies, Interns. Poster Design: Alison Wood; Typesetting: KAZAN Typeset Services.